
Vol. 19, No. 5 May 1989

the ALMACAN[®]

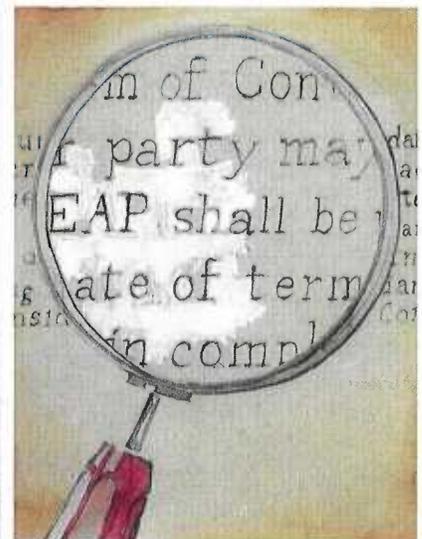
Published monthly by Association of Labor-Management Administrators and Consultants on Alcoholism



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Signs 'O the Times

WE ALL RECOGNIZE that major changes are occurring in the EAP field. Since last spring, a number of articles have been published in *THE ALMACAN* about managed mental health care. More recently, with the implementation of the Drug-Free Workplace Act, our field is benefitting from the rush of companies to implement EAPs—whether in full-service or scaled-down form—especially among small and mid-size firms.

Both developments may bode favorably for external EAP providers. And with the 80s trend of more companies contracting for external EAP services, the writing on the wall is that we all need to pay attention to new issues that have never been common topics of discussion in the EAP field before.

This month's cover is intended to convey three notions important to EAP contractors. The **light bulb** (yes, that overused cliché) represents creativity. It's often that entrepreneurial dint of genius which separates excellent companies from the mediocre. The **business suit** brings with it connotations of presentability and proper business etiquette. The **contract** is the document which puts the cards of a business deal on the table.

The starting point of this issue considers the EAP customer's viewpoint on why it wants EAP services and what it expects in terms of service delivery. Another article canvasses the current state of EAP

competition in selected parts of the United States and in one Canadian location. Hopefully, this "straw poll" will help to quantify the EAP field's present state of activity.

Other articles delve into vital issues related to EAP contracting. It is important to note that none of the information presented should be misconstrued as ALMACA policy. For example, information related to the parameters/definitions of levels of EAP services is based primarily on the comments of the people interviewed, *not* on data contained in ALMACA's still-to-be released *Revised Standards*.

Lastly, a new monthly column appears on the inside back page entitled "The Business Page." It carries information that provides EAP practitioners with practical business knowledge on topics which include tax-status considerations (this month's topic), aspects of selling an EAP, and staffing patterns. If the column meets our objective, you may start reading *THE ALMACAN* from the *BACK* of each issue!

Rudy M. Yandrick

RUDY M. YANDRICK
EDITOR

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PUBLISHED BY:

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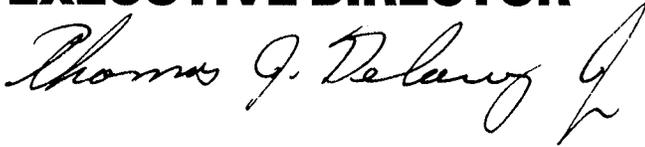
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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



by Thomas J. Delaney, CEAP
ALMACA Executive Director

While the results of the vote to select a new name for ALMACA were not known at the time of this writing, it is significant that three of the possible new names do not include the word "consultant." This reflects a change in the role of the consultant as it applies to the EAP field. The EAP administrators who belong to ALMACA also perform a range of services not envisioned when the current name was chosen in 1972. There are many organizations which specialize in providing a part of the spectrum of EAP services. One such specialty encompasses the old EAP consulting role.

I have been asked about the origins of the term "consultant" in the EAP field. In large part, it can be attributed to the late Ross Von Wiegand, who was director of industrial services for the National Council on Alcoholism 20 years ago. He came to the EAP field to follow up on the pioneering work of Lew Presnall. Ross had a strong business orientation and wanted to come up with a model for conveying the occupational alcoholism message to the leaders of industry. He decided that a good model existed in the benefits field. He knew of several prestigious management consulting firms that specialized in reviewing company retirement and health plans in order to help them design improved ones. The concept was based on loss control. Thanks to the work done by Lew Presnall, Ross had good information to demonstrate to industry the losses that were caused by alcoholism.

As the cover stories in this issue will show, the similarities between the benefits fields of today and during Ross' time are now evident in the current products of EAP providers. In fact, EAP and benefits practitioners are now, again, closely collaborating as they realize that they can best contribute to the corporate human resources

agenda that way. As I see it, they are both trying to design, implement and administer systems which will achieve healthy employees.

A number of EAP service providers are also doing consultation to in-house EAP and benefits administrators to better coordinate existing systems or design new ones, while in other cases EAP providers have developed separate product lines of EAP services, health care management or benefits consultation. As the same time, benefits consulting firms are developing EAP expertise. Each can certainly learn from the other and, increasingly, they are. This does not have to happen only on a company-to-company or company-to-client basis. A number of ALMACA chapters have sponsored programs featuring benefits or invited benefits administrators to chapter meetings. ALMACA chapters also provide speakers for benefits organizations, or business or labor conferences which address benefits.

A few years ago, ALMACA members would probably have expressed shock at the suggestion that the field is offering product lines. We may have already been doing it, but all but the most business-oriented of us did not recognize it as such. Today, it is essential to have a grasp on product lines and market niches. This is not to say that providers cannot offer a comprehensive line of services; many do. But the full-service companies have to package the components and be ready to install the portions that industry wants at the time. On the other hand, the specialists have to be able to fit their products into a comprehensive scheme, the other parts of which may be offered by in-house EAP or other service providers. The specialty EAP providers can offer a number of different kinds of services. A few examples are evaluation, executive intervention, case management, training, assessment and referral, and education.

Again, different EAP service providers can, and do, provide components

of the same EAP. This requires cooperation, but there is also competition for business. ALMACA is usually a home to these competitors. Just as with many trade organizations and most professional associations, EAP providers have to make a professional commitment to work for their common interests in ALMACA while recognizing that they can be competitors. This relationship has matured nicely in the last few years. The Consultants Committee, in particular, is designed to provide a mechanism for them to participate. Jack Dolan is the current chairperson and the committee is meeting the new challenges under his guidance.

Another relationship which is maturing is that between the external EAP firms and in-house programs. Just as labor and management had some initial disputes before finding common beneficiaries in ALMACA and the EAP field, there are also disputes between these groups. But considering the changes that have taken place in the EAP field over the last few years, it is surprising that there have not been more.

One area that understandably upsets in-house programmers is the potential of a bidder going behind his or her back and trying to convince top management to abandon the in-house program for a contract. Although this rarely happens, just the possibility of it understandably detracts in-house people from servicing their work forces. It would seem that this is an area that could benefit from mutual discussion between the Consultants Committee and Program Managers Committee. While antitrust considerations may preclude specific agreements, it would seem that there are enough work sites without EAPs to keep both sides busy. Moreover, as management becomes more sophisticated about the potential for EAP, there will probably be more utilization of specialized service providers by the comprehensive in-house programs. □

Table Talk With EACC Chairperson Dan Lanier About Recertification

ALMACA's Executive Committee approved the methods outlined in the recertification plan of the Employee Assistance Certification Commission (EACC), which was featured in the April issue. This month, in a question-and-answer interview, newly-appointed EACC chairperson Dan Lanier discusses some of the plan's specifics and the circumstances that contributed to them, and responds to questions raised by ALMACA chapters.

It is important to mention that the EACC commissioner most directly involved in the recertification process is Sandra Turner, recently elected as vice chairperson of the Commission. She heads the Recertification Committee.

ALMACAN: *Exactly where does the recertification process currently stand? Was it formally approved as official ALMACA "policy"?*

LANIER: Yes, the recertification plan is now policy. It was approved by the EACC and then reviewed by ALMACA's Executive Committee, which approved the methods and asked the EACC to proceed with implementation. The vote concluded a year-long process during which the Commission investigated recertification options, actively sought the feedback of ALMACA members and CEAPs, and provided a progress report to ALMACA's Board of Directors during the National Conference in Los Angeles. The actions led to formulation and approval



of the final draft.

The next important date to remember on the recertification calendar is May 15, when the EACC will formally begin to accept applications from providers of training [ALMACA chapters, independent providers, colleges, in-house EAPs, etc.] for approval of Professional Development Hours, or PDHs. By the way, I would encourage instructors wishing to apply for the granting of Professional Development Hours to obtain the endorsement of their local ALMACA chapter or five CEAPs, then contact the EACC as far in advance of the course dates as possible.

Applications received on May 15 or later, for courses beginning on July 1 or later, will be reviewed by the EACC for assignment of PDHs.

ALMACAN: *Introduction of the term "Professional Development Hour" may lead to possible confusion with continuing education unit (CEU) by CEAPs and ALMACA chapters. Wouldn't an ALMACA-controlled system of approving CEUs be a better alternative?*

LANIER: This was one of the areas most intently looked at by the Commission. The Commission feels that, as a standard for ongoing education, the CEU concept is too informal to guarantee the level of professional development that CEAPs told the EACC they wanted. Please keep in mind that in a very real sense we are *developing a profession* rather than *continuing an education*. You have to remember that very few of us were originally educated in EAP work.

Based on the feedback of CEAPs and ALMACA members, the recertification process requires more precise parameters than can be delivered by the CEU concept. For instance, Professional Development Hours will be obtainable through union or in-house training programs. PDHs may be earned at meetings that EAP professionals regularly attend, such as ALMACA chapter programs. CEAPs choose the PDH course work that is appropriate for themselves. PDHs relate to the six content areas of the certification exam which, combined, are EAP-specific.

Historically, CEUs have been the accrual method of continuing education for certified alcoholism coun-